

State of Alaska FY2005 Governor's Operating Budget

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Educational Benefits Component Budget Summary

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Component: Educational Benefits

Contribution to Department's Mission

Increase recruitment and retention by offering improved educational benefits to members of the Alaska National Guard and Naval Militia.

Core Services

Once becoming a guard member, advancement and promotion within the ranks is heavily education dependent. Officers must have 90 college semester hours completed prior to commissioning and have obtained a Bachelor's degree within 2 year after commissioning. Failure to complete a degree impacts the officer's promotion opportunities. Enlisted personnel who enlist with less than a 9th grade reading level are very likely not to be promoted to Sergeant/E-5 due to mandatory military schools that require 9th grade level reading skills. These funds assist members of the Alaska National Guard and Naval Militia by paying 100% of tuition and/or fees if they successfully complete classes to obtain post-secondary degrees or training in order to promote careers in the National Guard.

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs lists as one of its major goals and strategies for the Alaska Army and Air National Guard as; improved recruitment, retention. The Alaska Army National Guard is critically short of junior officers and senior grade enlisted personnel while the Alaska Air National Guard is behind in personnel strength compared to other like units. States that have 100% tuition assistance are at or near full strength in the officer and enlisted ranks and experience exceptionally high retention rate.

Major Activities to Advance Strategies

- Payment of guard members tuition costs to University of Alaska
- Reimbursement of Tution and Fees to Guard Members

FY2005 Resources Allocated to Achieve Results

FY2005 Component Budget: \$278,500	Personnel:	
	Full time	0
	Part time	0
	Total	0

Key Component Challenges

Tuition reimbursement funding – In FY2003, \$25,000 in requests were not funded for students wanting to attend other than University of Alaska post-secondary schools in the state. Demand will continue to exceed the \$28,500 annual funding for this program.

Significant Changes in Results to be Delivered in FY2005

There are no changes in the service level for FY 2005.

Major Component Accomplishments in 2003

The State Tuition Assistance Program provided \$28,500 to reimburse guard members for classes successfully completed at institutions in Alaska other than the University of Alaska system. In State Fiscal Year 2003 all \$28,500

was used and an additional \$25,000 in requests for assistance went unfunded. Forty-two Guard and Naval Militia members received state reimbursement funds.

The legislature also provided \$250,000 to pay for the tuition of Guard members attending classes at the University of Alaska. These funds were fully utilized this fiscal year and made it possible for over 450 guard members to attend the university. The availability of tuition waivers also allowed more members in the rural areas to pursue higher education goals. Guard members from Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau, Bethel, Ninilchik, Nulato, Hooper Bay and Nome have utilized this program. The failure rate has dropped dramatically and continues to decline. Procedures were implemented to require repayment in full for unsuccessful completion of classes making these funds available for other participants.

In FY 2003, 17 traditional guardsmen in Bethel received Basic Computer Training through the Yukon-Kuskokwim Education Project. In the first semester of FY04, eight Army Guard members from Bethel took a "Pre-Primary Leadership Development Course" through the University of Alaska Fairbanks Yukon-Kuskokwim campus.

Statutory and Regulatory Authority

AS 26.05.295-298 Educational assistance for enlisted personnel

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Educational Benefits Component Financial Summary

All dollars shown in thousands

	FY2003 Actuals	FY2004 Authorized	FY2005 Governor
Non-Formula Program:			
Component Expenditures:			
71000 Personal Services	0.0	0.0	0.0
72000 Travel	0.0	0.0	0.0
73000 Contractual	0.0	0.0	0.0
74000 Supplies	0.0	0.0	0.0
75000 Equipment	0.0	0.0	0.0
76000 Land/Buildings	0.0	0.0	0.0
77000 Grants, Claims	278.0	278.5	278.5
78000 Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0.0
Expenditure Totals	278.0	278.5	278.5
Funding Sources:			
1004 General Fund Receipts	278.0	278.5	278.5
Funding Totals	278.0	278.5	278.5

**Summary of Component Budget Changes
From FY2004 Authorized to FY2005 Governor***All dollars shown in thousands*

	<u>General Funds</u>	<u>Federal Funds</u>	<u>Other Funds</u>	<u>Total Funds</u>
FY2004 Authorized	278.5	0.0	0.0	278.5
FY2005 Governor	278.5	0.0	0.0	278.5